SAC (157-109) 3/25/68

SA WILLIAM H. LAWRENCE

COMINFIL OF SNCC
IS - SNCC; RM

On 3/7/68 Lt. E. H. ARKIN, Inspectional Bureau, Memphis, Tennessee, Police Department, advised from records that following the sit-in at Memphis City Hall 3/5/68 when over 100 sanitation workers strikers and sympathizers were arrested, ROY EUGENE TAYLOR, male Negro, arrest # 04776, was arrested by officers of the Memphis Police Department at Front and Monroe on a reckless driving charge at 5:50 p.m. He is a male Negro, DOB 4/27/45, residence 176 Majuba, Memphis; employed as porter at Firestone Tire and Rubber Company.

In the car with him were JOHN BURRELL SMITH, 1915 Rile, and CHARLES S. BALLARD, 1830 Kansas Street. The latter two were arrested for disorderly conduct. All three were immediately released on bond. They appeared in Memphis City Court, Division III, 3/6/68, before Judge RAY CHURCHILL. Sentences were deferred for 60 days, on conditions that charges would be dismissed if none of above were involved in any additional law violations during said 60-day period.

It would appear that the above arrest was a "put up job," as SA HOWELL S. LOWE, who covered the 3/5/68 strike sympathizers demonstration at City Hall, said that since JOHN B. SMITH, BALLARD, and other Black Power leaders did not choose to be arrested for "sitting in," Captain J. G. RAY, Inspectional Bureau, Memphis Police Department, directed two uniformed officers to follow SMITH and see if they could not also arrest him on some charge. The above traffic charge resulted.

157-1092-145

2-157-109
1-170-70-Sub
1-157- [redacted]
1-157-957 - [redacted]
1-157- [redacted]
1-157-1092 - SANITATION WORKERS STRIKE, MEMPHIS, TENN.
WHL:wp
(7)

On 3/7/68 [redacted], and [redacted] on 3/8/68 [redacted], all independently advised they regretted the arrest of JOHN B. SMITH and the attendant publicity, as his picture appeared on page one, 3/6/68, Press-Scimitar, as all this did was to make a martyr and hero of SMITH in the eyes of the young impressionable Negroes to whom he and CHARLES CABBAGE have been trying to peddle their Black Power philosophy. He is now "full of himself" and is a supreme egotist. In other words, the Memphis Police Department gave him the publicity he so badly wanted, and in order to satisfy an emotional wish to see him arrested, the Police Department may well have helped to create an irresponsible militant agitator whose actions may create a series of incidents which may later haunt them.

[redacted] added that surprisingly enough, JOHN B. SMITH and his Black Power associates at Owen, VERDELL BROOKS, CHARLES HARRINGTON, and CHARLES BALLARD, have not gained any perceptible support.

JOHN SMITH is keeping his grades up, although he never seems to study.

In connection with the above, on 3/7/68 [redacted] advised that he is well acquainted with ROY EUGENE TAYLOR, with whom JOHN B. SMITH and CHARLES BALLARD were arrested on the evening of 3/5/68. He stated that actually ROY EUGENE TAYLOR is the son of [redacted] He further advised that he had been reliably informed that ROY EUGENE TAYLOR just happened to be uptown, either on his way to work or on his way from work, when JOHN B. SMITH and CHARLES BALLARD hailed a ride with him after leaving the City Council meeting at City Hall earlier that afternoon, and that ROY EUGENE TAYLOR is now convinced the police arrested him in order to get at JOHN B. SMITH and CHARLES S. BALLARD and that he (TAYLOR) is quite bitter about it, particularly since the so-called witness who told the police that he (TAYLOR) had engaged in reckless driving has failed to appear. Accordingly, informant fears that ROY EUGENE TAYLOR, who has heretofore not been involved in the Black Power movement, may be drawn into it due to his hatred for police officers resulting from the circumstances of his arrest.

[redacted] JOHN B. SMITH and BALLARD at the City Hall prior to the arrest, and JOHN B. SMITH indicated he was trying to build himself up in order to draw attention from the police. He was carrying a typewriter case with him, and the police seemed to be most interested in him at the City Hall.

JOHN B. SMITH has since told [redacted] that actually the police followed BALLARD and SMITH after they left the City Hall and followed the car of ROY EUGENE TAYLOR after TAYLOR had picked up SMITH near the City Hall. [redacted] Judge CHURCHILL in City Court dismissed the case in City Court on 3/6/68 and apparently returned to TAYLOR the money charged for the tow-in of his car.

Informant said that ROY EUGENE TAYLOR is the son of JERRY TAYLOR, JR., who lives on Reagan Street and who was last known to work for the Post Office, but that ROY's grandfather, JERRY TAYLOR, SR., who lives in the 1800 block of Farrington Street near the home of JOHN B. SMITH, had raised ROY TAYLOR and had raised him well. It seems that ROY TAYLOR attended Carver High School and probably would have gone with JOHN B. SMITH. Several of ROY EUGENE TAYLOR's cousins have done quite well for themselves, one being an honor graduate from the University of Michigan. Another close relative is married to an Army Major. The grandparents have always pushed ROY, hoping that he would become a good student and emulate his smart relatives, although ROY did not seem to have the academic aptitude. ROY apparently has been recently working for either the IC Railroad or the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company.

He comes from a good family. Informant will be alert for any indications on the part of ROY EUGENE TAYLOR in which he might show an interest in becoming a part of the Black Power movement headed by CHARLES L. CABBAGE and JOHN B. SMITH.

Informant advised that there is considerable in-fighting with regard to the sanitation strike supporters and that there are three separate funds being raised for them, one headed by O. W. PICKETT and Rev. C. W. PORTER of the Church of God in Christ. There is another fund

operated by the Inter-Denominational Ministerial Alliance also known as COME (Community on the Move for Equality), and this fund is handled by Dr. H. RALPH JACKSON, head of the Minimum Wage Division of the AME Church, 280 Hernando Street. There is also a union fund which is being handled by CORNELIA CRENSHAW and WILLIAM LUCY, the Negro Field Representative of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, which is involved in the strike.

Another interesting sidelight furnished by informant was the fact that he said that despite some of the public flamboyant and rabble-rousing utterances reported in the press as having been made by Rev. EZEKIEL BELL, Parkway Gardens Presbyterian Church, and Rev. JAMES M. LAWSON of the Centenary Methodist Church, actually behind the scenes they are trying to keep JOHN B. SMITH, CHARLES CABBAGE, et al, in the Black Power movement from moving too rapidly and too militantly and they are doing this to satisfy some forces in the Negro community such as JESSIE TURNER, President of the NAACP; Rev. W. K. PORTER of the Church of God in Christ; and Rev. S. B. (BILLY) KYLES of the NAACP, who want to settle the strike.

JOHN B. SMITH is mad, according to his statement [redacted] on 3/6/68, stating that LAWSON and BELL are trying to keep the "wraps on him." He did not elaborate.